



SRAP5004

Policy, Accountability and Governance

Term Two // 2021

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Diana Perche	diana.perche@unsw.edu.au	Please email to arrange an appointment	Morven Brown, Level 1, Room 138	Contact via Teams

School Contact Information

School of Social Sciences

Room 159

Morven Brown C20

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phone: 02 9385 1807

Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

This course examines the mechanisms used to hold policy makers accountable in a democratic system, including administrative law, judicial review, ombudsmen, auditors-general, parliamentary committees, anti-corruption commissions, freedom of information and whistleblower protections. The course explores different theoretical approaches to accountability and responsibility and applies these to current debates in the Australian context, as well as internationally. The course will also critically assess the reach of accountability mechanisms in the light of recent changes to government service delivery, including outsourcing, contestability and public private partnerships, and consider responsibility and integrity in the context of multi-level governance.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Explain the core concepts of responsibility and accountability and their role within democratic policy-making.
2. Investigate the role and processes of the key accountability mechanisms at work in the Australian political system.
3. Apply theories of responsibility and accountability to real-world cases in contemporary Australian policy-making.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms with respect to the marketisation of government service delivery and the shift to governance.
5. Critically engage with current debates about democratic responsibility, accountability, participation, and redress in the policy process.

Teaching Strategies

This course will provide students with a historical understanding of the development of the doctrine of responsible government, with accountability mechanisms based in the Westminster parliamentary system, cabinet government and judicial review of the executive. They will become familiar with the various integrity agencies and other accountability mechanisms that are used in the Australian system today (such as the ombudsman, the auditor-general, freedom of information, administrative law, anti-corruption commissions, and whistleblower protections) and will critically evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. Students will be presented with a range of real case studies from Australian policy and will be encouraged to observe contemporary developments in accountability reported in the media. This course is designed to provide students with opportunities to combine academic and theoretical understandings of policy, accountability and governance with their own real world experience, and the experience of their peers. The in-depth focus on the Australian system will help to develop an understanding of the interconnected nature of integrity systems in a modern democracy, and will provide a basis for comparison with other policy contexts.

The course will be delivered in a blended mode, combining some online material with classroom seminar discussion and group learning activities. The use of current and recent historical examples will help students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world situations, using activities including debates, investigation and problem-based learning.

Assessment

The SOSS referencing guide should be used for all assessment tasks in this course, and the guide is available on Moodle.

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Opinion Piece	30%	27/06/2021 11:59 PM	1, 3, 5
Evaluation Report	30%	18/07/2021 11:59 PM	2, 4
Research Essay	40%	11/08/2021 11:59 PM	1, 3, 4, 5

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Opinion Piece

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 1500 words

Details:

This essay asks you to apply your understanding of accountability and responsibility to a current issue being reported in the Australian media. Word limit 1500 words. You will receive written feedback within 2 weeks of submission.

Additional details:

Details about this assessment task will be available on Moodle, along with the marking criteria and rubric.

Submission notes: Submit via Turnitin

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 2: Evaluation Report

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 1500 words

Details:

For this report, you will identify an integrity agency that is active in the Australian policy context at the federal or state level, investigate its role and processes and evaluate its effectiveness. Word limit 1500

words. You will receive written feedback within 2 weeks of submission.

Additional details:

Additional information will be provided on Moodle.

Submission notes: Submit via Turnitin

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 3: Research Essay

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 3000 words

Details:

For the research essay, you will be asked to apply theories of accountability and responsibility to a specific real-world case study. Details on the essay question will be posted on Moodle. Word limit 3000 words. You will receive written feedback within 2 weeks of submission.

Additional details:

Essay questions will be posted on Moodle, along with marking criteria and rubric.

Submission notes: Submit via Turnitin

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 31 May - 4 June	Seminar	Responsibility and accountability in a democracy
Week 2: 7 June - 11 June	Seminar	The Legislature: Parliamentary mechanisms of accountability
Week 3: 15 June - 18 June	Seminar	The Executive: mechanisms of accountability in a Westminster system
Week 4: 21 June - 25 June	Seminar	The Judiciary: Judicial independence and judicial review
Week 5: 28 June - 2 July	Seminar	Administrative law: regulating and reviewing government decision making
Week 6: 5 July - 9 July	Seminar	Integrity agencies and the integrity system in Australian jurisdictions
Week 7: 12 July - 16 July	Seminar	Whistleblowers and protected disclosures
Week 8: 19 July - 23 July	Seminar	The importance of information: FOI and the role of the media
Week 9: 26 July - 30 July	Seminar	Royal Commissions and accountability
Week 10: 2 August - 6 August	Seminar	The politics of accountability

Resources

Prescribed Resources

All required readings will be provided electronically through the Leganto reading list. You will be able to access this through Moodle.

Recommended Resources

Additional resources will be provided through Moodle.

Course Evaluation and Development

This course has been substantially redesigned and updated and this is the first time it will be offered in its new format. Your feedback will be valuable. Student evaluative feedback is gathered through formal process including UNSW's myExperience process, and will also be sought through informal surveys and discussion during the term. Student feedback is taken seriously and continual improvements will be made to the course based in part on your feedback.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au. Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/>). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.

<http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise>

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

<https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

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<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=55122082>

CRICOS

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Bedegal people who are the traditional custodians of the lands on which UNSW Kensington campus is located.